

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for considering the present application. In the Office Action dated June 20, 2005, claims 1-35 are pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner for a reconsideration of the rejections.

The specification has been amended to replace the attorney docket numbers with the appropriate serial numbers.

The drawings have been amended with reference numeral "171" being removed from Fig. 5A. A corrected version of Fig. 5A is provided with the reference numeral 172 therein. The specification has also been amended to refer to Figs. 5A and 5B.

Claims 4, 5, 7, and 17-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

Claims 4, 17, and 19 have been amended to overcome the rejections.

Claims 1-12, 14, 15, and 32-36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Mizusawa* (US Publication 2002/0145663) in view of *McGregor* (6,801,125). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 1 is directed to a method of controlling a vehicle that includes determining a straight position of the trailer using a trailer sensor during forward motion of the vehicle and controlling the vehicle to maintain the trailer in the straight position.

Applicants respectfully submit that the *Mizusawa* reference does not teach or suggest either. The *Mizusawa* reference is merely a method for reversing of a vehicle to align the vehicle so that the hitch may be coupled to the vehicle. There is no teaching or suggestion for use in the *Mizusawa* reference for providing the image processing for straight ahead travel. Claim 1 specifically recites determining a straight position of the trailer using a trailer sensor during forward motion of the vehicle. The *Mizusawa* reference in turn, determines the position of the vehicle relative to the trailer and not of a straight position of the trailer. Also, this positioning is done in reverse motion, not forward motion, of the vehicle. The *Mizusawa* reference also does not control the vehicle to maintain the trailer in a straight position. The *Mizusawa* reference is used before the trailer and the vehicle are coupled and therefore the vehicle cannot maintain the trailer in a straight position.

The *McGregor* reference is set forth for providing a sensor for determining "a straight position" of the trailer. The *McGregor* reference is also directed to a docking mode for a vehicle. That is, the docking mode is performed in reverse mode. The *McGregor* reference specifically applies to a rear wheel steering actuated vehicle. These specific limitations are set forth in independent claims 1 and 10 of the *McGregor* reference. The HD mode operates the rear steering actuator to maneuver the vehicle to bring the target location and the location of the vehicle into alignment. The *McGregor* reference does not teach or suggest the use in a forward direction to maintain the trailer in a straight ahead mode. The Examiner points to Col. 1, lines 43-50, specifically recite the docking mode. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejection of claim 1.

Claims 2-12, 14, and 15 are dependent upon claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for the same reasons set forth above.

Claim 32 recites determining a position of a trailer using a trailer sensor positioned on the vehicle and a locating plate having a locating hole located on the trailer. Claim 32 further recites determining the position of the locating hole relative to the vehicle when the vehicle is reversing toward the trailer and displaying an indication of the position of the locating hole relative to the vehicle. Applicants have reviewed both the *McGregor* reference and the *Mizusawa* reference. Although both of the references teach reversing, no teaching or suggestion is provided for a locating hole in a locating plate positioned on a trailer. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejection of claim 32. Likewise, claims 33-35 are also believed to be allowable since they depend from claim 32.

Claims 17-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being unpatentable over *Mizusawa* in view of *McGregor* and *Gerum*.

Claim 17 recites a steering actuator generating a signal indicative of a desired trailer turn direction, reverse signal means generating a reverse signal corresponding to a reverse direction of the vehicle, a trailer position sensor generating a trailer position signal, and a controller programmed to brake-steer the vehicle to maintain the vehicle in the desired trailer turn direction. As mentioned above, both the *McGregor* and *Mizusawa* references are used for docking the vehicle. Claim 17 has a vehicle and trailer that are coupled together. The *McGregor* and *Mizusawa* references teach disconnected vehicles so that the trailer and the vehicle may be brought together. It should also be noted that a secondary steering actuator is used to generate the signal

indicative of a desired trailer direction. The second secondary steering actuator may comprise many things, including a turn signal actuator, or push button, or the like. That is, the direction of the trailer is taught to the control system. The *Gerum* reference does not teach or suggest this. The *Gerum* reference teaches using brakes to stabilize the vehicle to prevent jackknifing and the like. No secondary steering actuator is taught or suggested. Therefore, claims 17-31 are also believed to be allowable since none of the references teach a secondary steering actuator. It should be noted that the secondary steering actuator is in addition to the steering wheel. Likewise, claims 18-31 are believed to be allowable since they depend from allowable claim 17. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider this rejection as well.

In light of the above remarks, Applicants submit that all rejections are now overcome. Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance and expeditious notice thereof is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Please charge any fees required in the filing of this amendment to Deposit Account 06-1510.

Respectfully submitted,



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